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ABSTRACT

Forty-seven high school newspaper advisers from Utah completed a questionnaire to determine their knowledge of First Amendment rights of student journalists, and to determine what variables may affect their publication decisions. Eight composite cases were developed from relevant First Amendment court decisions. Respondents were asked if they would print items discussed in the eight cases and whether they had a legal right to do so. In addition, respondents were asked with what criteria they judged the appropriateness of an item for publication. These and demographic factors, including professional credentials, were entered into a regression equation to find out what factors most affected publication decisions. Data were also tabulated with consideration of both legal knowledge and how it affects prior restraint. The findings supported an overall correlation between community standards and censorship. In addition, legal awareness decreased advisers' willingness to censor, but degree of academic journalism training did not. (A copy of the questionnaire used in the study is appended.) (HTH)

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PRIOR RESTRAINT OF UTAH HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS BY ADVISERS

by

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submitted for presentation to

Secondary Education Division,

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August, 1984 National Convention

*This study was part of Mrs. Pulley's Masters Degree thesis project at Utah State University. Dr. Black is a professor in the Department of Communication there.

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ABSTRACT

Prior Restraint of Utah High School Newspapers by Advisers

The purpose of this paper was twofold: to survey one state's high school newspaper advisers concerning their knowledge of First Amendment rights of student journalists, and to determine what variables may affect publication decisions of Utah high school newspaper advisers.

Relevant court decisions were selected, and from them, eight composite cases were formed. Respondents were asked if they would print items discussed in the eight cases, and whether they had the legal right to print the items. In addition, respondents were asked on what criteria they judged the appropriateness of an item for publication. These factors, along with demographic background such as years of experience, teaching, size of school and academic journalism training, were entered into a regression equation to find out what affected publication decisions the most.

The sample was the 89 advisers in Utah. Completed questionnaires were returned by 47 advisers (52 percent). Data were also tabulated with consideration of legal knowledge and how it affects prior restraints. The findings support an overall correlation between community standards and censorship. In addition, legal awareness did decrease willingness to censor, but academic journalism training did not.

a research paper presented to

Secondary Education Division, AEJMC

August, 1984 National Convention

by
Cynthia Ford Pulley, M.S.
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Prior Restraint of Utah High School Newspapers by Advisers

Statement of the Problem

In March, 1977, Lilly Kober, a Fort Scott, Kansas, high school newspaper adviser, was reassigned for refusing to censor an article on cafeteria food cooked by the principal's wife. Kober filed suit July 1 in the U.S. District Court in Kansas, charging "abridgement of her rights, the journalism students' rights, and the rights of the publication's readers as guaranteed by the First and Fourteenth Amendments."[1] Her case was decided out of court, and she retained her position.

In 1970 Don Patrick Nicholson, journalism teacher and newspaper adviser at Torrance, California, high school, was fired by Principal Carl Ahee for not submitting to authority. Nicholson had disagreed with the administrator when Ahee had insisted that the Four-way Test, a Rotary Club guideline for everyday living, be the only guideline for student publications.[2]

Advisers of school newspapers have found themselves caught between the First Amendment rights of students and pressures from administrators since the middle 1960s, when many high school newspapers replaced their "bulletin board image" with a progressive image that called for exchanging ideas among students whether or not those ideas were negative.[3]

In 1974 the Commission of Inquiry in High School Journalism, sponsored by the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial, found that advisers practiced questionable and unconstitutional restraints on school newspapers. These restraints were imposed by advisers because (1) they feared reprisals such as the loss of their job or rejection by colleagues, (2) unconstitutional formal and "understood" policies were implemented by administrators, (3) the material in question was not acceptable for print according to perceived community and school standards, and (4) the advisers did not know what they could legally print.[4]

Purpose of the Study

The controversy over student press rights caused the courts in the United States to rule with increasing frequency during the 1970s. But apparently those court decisions, despite being more often than not decided in favor of the students, are not being accepted, understood, or even heard by high school personnel.[5]

The Commission of Inquiry found that often advisers do not accept decisions because they are afraid of controversy. They also do not understand them because if they have had access to the decisions, they have not taken time to study them. The advisers, especially in areas where student press controversies have not reached the courts, may not have heard of any existing court decisions.[6]

In the past advisers have censored or have been forced to censor by administrators. That restraint has been challenged and some advisers found themselves in court only to discover that their decision or the decision of an administrator was wrong.[7] For this reason advisers should be informed about how much restraint is acceptable according to court decisions. By knowing this they can avoid making poor decisions that might deter the student newspaper from becoming a healthy forum of expression. However, before these things can be accomplished, research needs to identify the level of legal awareness and just what factors do affect censorship. The purpose of this study, then, is twofold: to survey advisers concerning their knowledge of First Amendment rights of student journalists, and to determine what variables may affect publication decisions of high school newspaper advisers.

Although there is a growing body of data-based research about high school newspaper rights, there have been no studies conducted in Utah, a state generally considered to be culturally homogenous and highly likely to condone censorship of inflamatory or highly sensitive high school publications.

Research Objectives and Methodology

As noted on page one of this study, advisers censor for a number of reasons. Numerous court decisions and the Commission of Inquiry in High School Journalism have suggested that censorship is a multi-faceted process, but that the role of the adviser is central. This study concentrates on several of those factors that motivate advisers to censor or not to censor. Specifically, the following hypotheses were tested:

H_1: The higher an adviser's legal awareness score, the less likely he/she is to express a willingness to censor the high school newspaper.

H_2: The more formal course work in mass communication law an adviser has studied, the less likely he/she is to express a willingness to censor.

H_3: Advisers who place less importance on their perception of community standards are less likely to express willingness to censor than are those who place more importance on their perception of community standards.

H_4: The more academic journalism training an adviser has, the less likely he/she is to express a willingness to censor.

H_5: Advisers who teach in larger schools will be less likely to express a willingness to censor than will advisers who teach in smaller schools.

Two additional issues arising from the present study's concentration on Utah's newspaper advisers gave rise to a pair of research questions:

1) What variables affect censorship the most?

2) What are the most important criteria in publication decision-making?

The subjects for the study were all Utah high school newspaper advisers. There are 97 high schools in Utah. Questionnaires were mailed to advisers of the 89 which had newspapers. Of those 89, some 47 (52.8 percent) responded, a figure deemed satisfactory for a mail questionnaire.

The questionnaire was patterned after one originally developed by C. Robert Blackmon and E. Joseph Broussard[8] intended to test censorship and legal

awareness. The eight situations presented on the questionnaire (see Appendix A) were derived from 35 court cases dealing with similar situations. The second part of the questionnaire was developed from information reported in Captive Voices: The Report of the Commission of Inquiry Into High School Journalism (1974). The commission discovered a variety of variables contributing to censorship, including personal views of community and school standards, administrative policies and teacher peer pressure, views on interest and fairness to readers. These were among the items comprising the second section of the questionnaire. The third section of the instrument asked for demographic information, including academic journalism and legal background, age, years of teaching experience, and size of school.

The instrument was pretested twice to create face validity.

Data were collected through the following procedures:

1) Phone calls were made to each high school to determine the names of current advisers. Questionnaires were sent to the 89 schools that had student newspapers. A cover letter explained that the purpose of the study was to find out what publication decisions an adviser would make if faced with the same situations addressed in U.S. courts.

2) After three weeks 28 had been returned; a followup letter generated 19 additional responses.

3) Instructions for the instrument's first section asked the advisers to answer both questions following each of the eight hypothetical situations. Also requested was additional explanation to those responses, since their reasons behind printing or not printing might be revealing. Questions following each hypothetical were:

a) Would you print this? 1. Yes _____ 2. No _____ Why? _____

b) Do you have the legal right to print it? 1. Yes_____ No _____

4) The advisers were asked, prior to answering questions in the second section of the questionnaire, "On what do you generally evaluate appropriateness of stories and photos you approve for publication in the student newspaper?"

The questions following the first eight hypothetical situations were coded using "zero" and "one". A "one" was given if their response to the legal question agreed with the majority of court cases which addressed that subject. A "zero" was given for an "incorrect" response. A "one" was given for publication decisions that matched the correct legal response and a "zero" was given if the decision disagreed with the correct legal response. If no response was given, it was considered missing. The correct responses to the questions following the eight situations, "Do you have the legal right to print this?", were added to form the legal awareness score. The highest possible legal awareness score was eight, the lowest was zero. The correct responses to the question, "Would you print this?", were added to form the noncensorship score, meaning that a high noncensorship score meant the adviser was expressing less willingness to censor than an adviser who scored low on that scale.

The second section of the questionnaire was also coded with "zero" or "one." For example, the advisers were asked, "On what do you generally evaluate the appropriateness of stories and photos you approve for publication for the student newspaper?" Several critera were listed, with multiple responses permitted, and a "one" given to each answer checked.

Finally, a variable was formed from the general theme of responses given to the question "Why?" following each of the eight hypotheticals. Those responses, which explained why the adviser chose to publish or not publish a given item, were coded into categories such as fear of job loss, state guidelines, and administrative pressures which would not allow them to publish certain items.

The dependent variable in all equations was the noncensorship score. The independent variables were the answers included in the second section of the questionnaire such as community and school standards, administrative policies and pressures, fairness to those involved, interest to readers, and whether or not they had the legal right to publish. Other independent variables were those

included in the demographic section, plus the legal awareness score.

A Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship noncensorship scores have to the independent variables specified in the five hypotheses. A step-wise regression was used to determine which of all factors accounted most for censorship. After a first step-wise regression showed that four factors accounted for over 30 percent of the variance in the first equation, a second regression was done to determine the effect of those four on the variance of noncensorship scores.

Results of the Study

Tests of the five hypotheses were as follows:

H_1: The higher an adviser's legal awareness score, the less likely he/she is to express willingness to censor.

There is a positive relationship between legal awareness and noncensorship ($r=.24$, $n=47$, $p=.05$)., indicating that legal awareness does have a positive effect on the adviser's willingness not to censor. A .24 correlation is consider low, but is high enough to be significant, and the probability level is significant to the .05 level. The hypothesis is confirmed.

H_2:The more formal course work in mass communication law an adviser has studied, the less likely he/she is to express a willingness to censor.

The results indicate a positive correlation between mass communication law studied and noncensorship ($r=.11$, $n=47$, $p=.24$). However, the correlation (.11) is too low to prove any kind of relationship between the variables, and the .24 probability level is insignificant. The hypothesis is rejected.

H_3: Advisers who place less importance on their perception of community standards are less likely to express willingness to censor than are those who place more importance on their perception of community standards.

The results show there is a correlation between advisers who do not base

their decisions on their definition of community standards and noncensorship scores (r=.25, n=47, p=.04). The level of probability (.04) is significant. The hypothesis is confirmed.

H_4: The more academic journalism training an adviser has, the less likely he/she is to express a willingness to censor.

The positive correlation (r=.11, n=47, p=.23) indicates noncensorship scores are higher for those advisers who have taken journalism courses. However, the correlation (.11) and probability (.23) are not significant. The hypothesis is rejected.

H_5: Advisers who teach in larger schools will be less likely to express a willingness to censor than will advisers who teach in smaller schools.

The correlation between noncensorship scores and the size of school is moderate (r+.37, n=47, p=.005). The results are highly significant. The hypothesis is confirmed.

In sum, the directional predictions for hypotheses one through five all agreed with the r values. However, the r value of hypotheses two and four were too low and the probability was too high for the results of those two hypotheses to be significant.

The hypotheses showed the correlation of variables that were suspected of having the greatest influence on an adviser's willingness not to censor. However, those variables were predetermined by the researchers. The data from the instrument, which included in addition to the variables tested above several other variables, lent themselves to two additional research questions, as previously noted:

1) What variables affect censorship the most?

2) What are the most important criteria in publication decision-making?

Statistical methods used to determine the importance of these variables were: (1) a regression equation which predicted the effective variables, (2) frequency

distributions of criteria advisers used in judging appropriateness of material and (3) coding the general theme of responses explaining why the advisers would censor or print the items listed in the questionnaire.

Responses to the question "On what do you base publication decisions?" included written policies about publication, "understood policies," peer pressure from other teachers, community and school standards, fairness and legality. A step-wise regression equation (see Table 1) determined that as expected, school enrollment accounted for the most variance (14 percent). How often a school newspaper was published also had some effect on the variance of censorship scores (5 percent). Others that were similar in variance effect were school standards and whether or not the adviser had taken education law. Together these four variables accounted for 30 percent of the variance.

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF REGRESSION EQUATION

	N of Cases	r	Beta	F	Degrees of Freedom	Percent of Variance	p
School enrollment	47	.37	.86*	16.26	Regression 5* Residual 41*	15	.05
How often published	47	-.02	-.76*	7.42		5	.05
School standards	47	.24	-.83	3.1		6	.05
Education law	47	.04	-.79	2.5		4	.05
					Total	30	

Table 2 explains the frequency and percentage of responses given by advisers who were asked to explain why they would consider censoring a given item. Advisers marked "interest to students and readers" more often than any other criteria for making publication decisions. Second in line

TABLE 2

RESPONSES TO CRITERIA FOR

PUBLICATION DECISIONS

	Yes		No	
	Number	%*	Number	%*
Formal written policies (school adminis.)	4	9	43	92
Formal written policies (school board)	7	15	40	85
Informal "understood" policies	23	49	24	51
Reaction of other teachers	8	17	39	83
Adviser's definition of community standards	27	57	20	43
Adviser's definition of school standards	22	53	25	47
Interest to students and readers	39	83	8	17
Fairness to those involved	36	77	11	23
Legal right	20	43	27	57

* Rounded to the nearest whole number.

is consideration of fairness to those involved; third, personal definitions of community standards; fourth, informal understood policies set by the administration. Apparently, very few advisers consider formal written policies set by school administration and school board.

At another point in the questionnaire, advisers indicated why they would or would not publish the hypothetical materials. Of the nine types of answers given, the most frequently cited was "administrative pressures." Thirty-eight percent of the respondents used this explanation, compared with 15 percent who cited their personal perceptions of community standards and their specific state guidelines. Other reasons given were the fear of losing their jobs (13 percent), their personal standards (11 percent), and two percent for each of the following four reasons: being near retirement and can afford to publish a controversial item; consider themselves as publishers; determining that certain public actions aren't worth publishing, and determining that students wouldn't be interested in the subject.

A comparison of Table 2 (frequencies of criteria for publication decisions) and Table 1 (the regression equation) indicates different variables are primarily responsible for censorship or noncensorship. For instance, the most frequently cited responses (Table 2) were interest to students and readers, fairness, and community standards. However, Table 1 indicated that school enrollment, frequency of newspaper publication, school standards, and whether or not the adviser had taken education law had the greatest bearing on the non-censorship score.

The general response variable, derived from the adviser's answers to the question "Why?" (explaining their decision whether or not to publish the hypothetical item), gives more insight into why advisers would or would not print the material. The most often expressed reason given was the administrative pressures; next were community standards and fear of job loss.

Thus Research Question 1 can be answered by saying the single-most important factor affecting variance in noncensorship scores was school enrollment; i.e., advisers in large school are less likely to censor than are advisers in smaller schools. The second most important factor is how often the school paper is published; i.e., frequently published newspapers are less likely to be censored than are infrequently published papers. The third most important factor is the advisers' definition of school standards.

Research Question 2 can be answered by saying that interest to students should be the most important criterion in judging appropriateness of an item, followed by a sense of fairness to those involved, definitions of community standards, and definitions of school standards. However, the regression equation shows school standards as being of more importance. The tabulation of the general responses as shown in Figure 1 indicate that administrative pressures have the most influence on advisers' judgments of whether or not they would publish an item.

Conclusions

The conclusions will be discussed hypothesis by hypothesis, followed by the research questions.

H_1: The first hypothesis was confirmed. The higher the legal awareness score, the less likely the adviser will express willingness to censor. Although the correlation was quite low, there is a significant support for the assumption that the more an adviser is aware of student press law, not just mass communication law, the more accepting he/she will become of controversial subjects submitted for publication.

H_2: This hypothesis was not confirmed. The advisers who had taken coursework in mass communications law did not censor significantly less than those who had not. This finding is important in that knowledge of mass communication law, as it is taught in the classes most advisers took,

did not necessarily translate into acceptance of their legal rights. It may be that for one reason or another the law courses did not show the correlation between general first amendment principles and high school press freedom, or it may have been that the communications law courses were poorly taught--indeed, any number of explanations might be offered, including speculation that awareness of legal rights is overshadowed by administrative pressures toward conformity.

H_3: This hypothesis was confirmed. Advisers who base decisions on community standards are highly likely to censor. This confirmation strengthens the 1974 Commission of Inquiry's finding that advisers censor in the name of community standards. The results also indicate that perceived community standards (which are not necessarily the same as actual community standards, it must be noted) serve as a socializing process, much as administration pressure does.

H_4: The fourth hypothesis was not confirmed. Much the same thing appears to be at work here as was mentioned above regarding Hypothesis 2: Advisers who had more academic journalism training did not have a significantly higher noncensorship score than those who had less basic journalism training. The finding is somewhat surprising, and begs for further investigation. Could it be that journalism students who intend to become educators are inherently more conservative than those intending to embark upon mass media careers--even before they begin their college studies? Again, is the pressure to conform seen as a greater good than the motivation to utilize press freedom? Any number of other explanations may be uncovered by further research.

H_5: The fifth hypothesis was confirmed. Advisers who taught in larger schools (300 or more students) had significantly higher noncensorship scores than those who taught in smaller schools. Since this hypothesis had a higher correlation than the other four explored in this study, it may be

assumed that larger schools may have a greater tolerance for more controversial subjects such as those addressed in the questionnaire.

The results of this study have several implications:

1) The number of students enrolled in a school is a direct factor in the willingness to censor, and it may be that larger schools are in communities which advisers perceive as having a broader acceptance of controversial subjects such as birth control, criticism of school officials, and disproportionate state taxes--all issues raised in the hypotheticals.

2) Mass communication law and academic journalism have almost no influence on the presence or absence of censorship. However, legal awareness of student press law as defined by the courts results in decreased censorship. Therefore a state organization of high school newspaper advisers, or membership in a national organization which concentrates on high school freedoms and responsibilities, appear to have significant potential for adviser awareness.

3) Advisers may claim they print what is of interest to students, but advisers' written responses on the questionnaire indicate that other factors such as fear of losing their jobs, state policies, or personal standards, determine what their publication decisions will be. These latter concerns are not unrealistic. Numerous advisers across the country have found themselves in court for insubordination. Utah advisers commented on the possibility of losing their jobs when they were asked if they would publish a story criticizing school board members. One adviser responded, "I value my job more (than printing the story)." Another wrote, "I like to eat." Still another indicated that new teachers who are replaceable cannot take such chances. "I'm still on probation as a new teacher. Wait until next year," the adviser wrote.

Some advisers indicated through their written comments that they would not print anything that would offend their publishers, the members of the school board. The idea that school boards are publishers is a misconception, since the courts have ruled several times that schools are public forums and

school boards cannot be held responsible for what appears in the school paper. Still, the advisers have the idea they are controlled by the school board. One adviser commented, "We do not offend our publisher," when asked if she would print the story critical of the school board. A second adviser wrote, "I don't feel our school board would go alone with it, plus I don't feel I would either." A third said he would not print a story on the school board because he thought seriously that his "principal would lose his grip."

Another major reason advisers gave for expressing willingness to censor controversial material was that state policies prohibited them from printing controversial material. Several advisers wrote that such guidelines prevented them from distributing any information about sex education or birth control. They were refering to guidelines defined in 1974 and since reaffirmed by the Utah State Board of Education's Course of Study and Textbook Commission, holding that teachers in all classroom situations shall not explicitly describe the act of sexual intercourse, nor promote homosexuality or use of contraceptives to students.[9] Although these guidelines apply to the classroom situation, it is questionable whether or not they apply to the open forum pages of the high school press. It is possible to print informative articles about sexuality of students without violating these guidelines. (Also, it would be interesting to know if these guidelines could be upheld as constitutional if challenged in court.)

The final significant reason advisers gave for their willingness to censor was their own personal standards of what is fit to print. Most of the respondents indicated that printing a story with a "four-letter word" regarding sexual intercourse would be in poor taste. Concerning an article of a damaging nature about the school board, an adviser said she would not print the item because she would be "careful about printing a story of a damaging nature about anyone." Such results relate to the perceived standards of acceptance within individual advisers' own schools.

In summary, then, advisers do not appear to place as much importance on legal knowledge as they do on personal and community standards when making publication decisions. It seems as though they don't consider a decision not to print as an act of censorship, but as a method of teaching students what is accepted in their newspaper according to school and community standards. It is ironic that advisers would state that the main criterion for evaluating appropriateness of articles is whether they are of interest to the students, while their comments and the results indicate that losing a job, adhering to community standards, and following state guidelines are more important.

Perhaps they feel that a school newspaper should reflect school standards. That is not an uncommon philosophy, nor is it unreasonable unless well thought-out ideas are being censored in the name of community and personal standards alone. That defeats the purpose of the school newspaper as a public forum, and the "public" does indeed include the community. Other reasons they might censor include the feeling that students would not be interested in or have the maturity to deal with the subjects. In either case, the U.S. courts have ruled it is wrong to prior restrain any material unless there are specific narrow guidelines of protected speech such as libel and obscenity.

This study clearly indicates a need for a better understanding of the open forum role of the Utah high school newspaper. Advisers appear to be caught between promoting a healthy arena for exchange of opinions and adhering to what they perceive to be the expectations of principals, the community, and students. The misconceptions about state policies and the role of the administrators as publishers indicates a need for written policies about the ideal roles all parties concerned should play. In addition, answers to legal questions concerning what can be printed, such as those suggested

by the Student Press Law Center, might alleviate some of the grey areas of student press rights.

Seven of the 47 advisers contacted in this study indicated their schools already have taken steps toward establishing formal publications policies. As of yet, no such guidelines have been upheld as constitutional by a U.S. court. Nevertheless, the security such guidelines would promote among advisers and staffers could result in a healthier exchange of ideas, so students could gain a greater appreciation of their right to free speech.

Formal guidelines should include sections on unprotected speech (such as language inciting disruption, libel, and obscenity), so advisers, staffers, and administrators would deal confidently with items that are merely controversial rather than illegal. Guidelines therefore should not be overly general, lest community standards or personal values of the administrator or adviser impose unwarranted restraints on student publications.

Other solutions that may promote more understanding of the student newspaper as a public forum are workshops and classes specifically dealing with student press law as it is defined in the courts. If these were made available to advisers and administrators, and they were taken advantage of by those school officials, perhaps some of the uneasiness and defensiveness about student press rights might be alleviated.

In addition, advisers who take the time to inform themselves might pass their knowledge and ideas about a responsible open forum on to their students. There is plenty of discussion about student press rights, but little is said about the responsibilities that come with maintaining those rights. A unit on journalism ethics, if not already employed in the classroom, could assist advisers in developing responsible young journalists.

END NOTES

[1]Bettye Grelling, "Guidelines for Publications: Why They Are Needed and How to Prepare Them." Quill and Scroll, (December-January, 1981), p. 30.

[2]Jack Nelson, Captive Voices: High School Journalism in America. Report of the Commission of Inquiry Into High School Journalism. (New York: Schocken Books, 1974), pp. 19-24.

[3]Robert Trager, Student Press Rights. (Urbana, Ill.: Journalism Education Association, 1974), (ERIC ED 096 691).

[4]Nelson, pp. 29-37.

[5]Thomas Eveslage, "Advisers Know About Student Press Rights, But...," Quilll and Scroll, (December-January, 1981), p. 10.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Nelson, pp. 29-37.

[8]E. Joseph Broussard and C. Robert Blackmon, "Ethical and Legal Dichotomies on the First Amendment Rights of the Student Press," Unpublished paper, Louisiana State University, 1970, pp. 1-16. (Photocopied.)

[9]Telephone interview with Robert Leake, coordinator of School Improvement, Utah State Board of Education, 30 March 1983.

In the blanks provided, please respond to BOTH of the questions following each of the eight situations described below. Additional explanation to your responses would be helpful, so would you please answer the question "why?"

SITUATION 1--The school newspaper attacks the way law enforcement officials handled a situation on campus.

1) Would you publish this? 1. Yes 62% 2. No 38% Why?

2) Do you have the legal right to publish this? 1. Yes 97.9% 2. No 2.1%

SITUATION 2--A story written by one of your better staff members contains information of a damaging nature to the superintendent and school board members of your school district regarding some of their public actions.

3) Would you publish this? 1. Yes 30% 2. No 70% Why?

4) Do you have the legal right to publish this? 1. Yes 81% 2 No 19%

SITUATION 3--Students on your staff distribute an underground newspaper that criticizes the school administration and strongly urges the student-body to disregard specific school regulations.

5) Do you feel you should prevent this distribution? 1. Yes 60% No 40% Why?

6) Do the students have the legal right to distribute it? 1. Yes 62% 2. No 38%

SITUATION 4--Your staff approves the publication of an advertisement for contraceptives.

7) Would you publish this ad? 1. Yes 92% 2. No 8% Why?

8) Do you have the legal right to publish the ad? 1. Yes 64% 2. No 36%

SITUATION 5--The editor of the school newspaper uses in one of his articles a "four-letter" word relative to sexual intercourse.

9) Do you feel you should demand removal of the word? 1. Yes 72% 2. No 27% Why?

10) Can you legally prevent use of the word? 1. Yes 64% 2. No 36%

SITUATION 6--A student's unposed picture is used in the school newspaper in an advertisement.

11) Would you publish this? 1. Yes 43% 2. No 57% Why?

12) Do you have the legal right to publish this? 1. Yes 43% 2. No 57%

SITUATION 7--The editor of your newspaper writes an editorial attacking disproportionate state taxes on white and blue collar workers.

13) Would you print this? 1. Yes 75% 2. No 25% Why?

14) Do you have the legal right to print this? 1. Yes 94% 2. No 6%

SITUATION 8--The school newspaper runs a story that says sexually active students are not using contraceptives.

15) Would you print this? 1. Yes 43% 2. No 57% Why?

16) Do you have the legal right to print this? 1. Yes 72% 2. No 28%

On what do you generally evaluate the appropriateness of stories and photos you approve for publication for the student newspaper? (Please read all choices before responding. You may check more than one answer if you like.)

9% 17) Formal written policies set by administration regarding student publications.

15% 18) Formal policies set by administration and the school board regarding school publications.

49% 19) Informal "understood" policies set by the administration of your school.

17% 20) How other teachers in the school will react to each item?

57% 21) Whether or not it will reflect your definition of community standards.

53% 22) Whether or not it will reflect your definition of school standards.

83% 23) If it is informative and of interest to students.

76% 24) How fair the item is to those involved, i.e. readers, source of story, the school as a whole and the reporter.

42% 25) Whether or not you have the legal right to let it be printed.

26) Do you visit regularly with your principal to discuss operations and problems of the student newspaper?

26% 1. Never

60% 2. Seldom

13% 3. Often

--- 4. Frequently

27) If you do meet regularly with your principal regarding student publication problems, under what circumstances do you meet?

6% 1. Formally

51% 2. Informally

42% 3. N/A

BACKGROUND DATA

28) What is your age? 1. Under 30 2. 30 to 39 3. 40 to 49 50 or more
19% 40% 28% 13%

29) How many years of experience have you had as a high school newspaper adviser? 1. 0-3 years 2. 4-10 years 3. 11 or more
49% 30% 21%

30) Have you studied journalism? 1. Yes 64% 2. No 36%

31) How many college credits in journalism have you taken?
1. 35 or more 2. 25-35 3. 15-25 4. 8-15 5. 1-8
13% 9% 9% 13% 26%

Quarter hours_____ Semester hours_____

32) If you responded yes to No. 31, please indicate if you have had a course in mass communication law?
1. Yes 19% 2. No 81%

33) Have you studied education law? 1. Yes 51% 2. No 49%
No. of credit hours_____

34) Does your school or school district have a formal statement of policies regarding the operation of student publications?
1. Yes 14% 2. No 85%

IMPORTANT--IF YOU HAVE A COPY OF YOUR SCHOOL'S FORMAL POLICIES, WILL YOU PLEASE ENCLOSE IT IN THE RETURN ENVELOPE WITH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE?

35) Name of your school_____

36) Number of students in your school_____

37) How often is your newspaper published? _____